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Senate panel begins probe for lies on CIA role in Chile

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Washington—The Senate Foreign Relations Committee set out yesterday to determine whether senior administration officials lied about the United States' role in Chile and whether the Central Intelligence Agency needs closer congressional supervision.

After a week or 10 days of further staff study, Senator J. W. Fulbright (D., Ark.), the chairman, said the committee will decide what to do next.

The committee took its holding action amid a growing furor over the acknowledged CIA efforts to frustrate the government of the late President Salvador Allende. President Ford fueled the debate Monday night by acknowledging and defending American efforts to prevent Dr. Allende's rise to power and to subvert his government after he succeeded.

Dr. Allende was shot to death—his successors said he killed himself—during a coup a year ago. Administration officials, from Mr. Ford down, deny flatly that the U.S. had any direct part in the coup.

The Foreign Relations Committee acted after publication of a leaked staff report. It calls for a determination of whether Richard M. Helms, former CIA director, and three State Department officials lied when they denied U.S. intervention in Chile's internal politics.

The report also suggests Henry A. Kissinger "deceived" the committee by denying a U.S. role in the coup without See CIA, A2, Col. 3

mentioning subversion of the Allende regime. Dr. Kissinger testified during the hearings that confirmed him as secretary of state last fall.

Takes no position

With its decision the committee avoided a position on the report itself, prepared by Jerome I. Levinson. Mr. Levinson is counsel for the Subcommittee on Multinational Corporations, which, headed by Senator Frank Church (D., Idaho), received much of the controversial testimony.

The complex public debate began earlier this month when Representative Michael J. Harrington (D., Mass.), released testimony given last April 22 by William E. Colby, successor to Mr. Helms at the CIA. Mr. Colby was said to have confirmed that the United States spent up to \$11 million to frustrate the political ambitions of Dr. Allende, a Marxist, and to combat his government after he was elected in 1970.

Mr. Ford confirmed the policy if not the amounts during his Monday night press conference.

Without making a judgment on international law on the subject, he said, "It is a recognized fact that historically, as well as presently, such actions are taken in the best interest of the countries involved." CIA activity, he went on, was in response to Dr. Allende's efforts to "destroy opposition news media . . . and to destroy opposition political parties."

"The effort that was made in this case," the President said, "was to help and assist the preservation of opposition newspapers and electronic media and to preserve opposition political parties. I think this is in the best interests of the people in Chile and certainly in our best interests."

Remarkable admission

However, Mr. Ford added, he would confer with congressional committees to learn whether they want to know more about and to review such covert operations. A group of four senior senators now constitutes a review committee, but Mr. Harrington said yesterday it represents merely "a fiction" of congressional monitoring.

Mr. Ford's statement con-

ceding interference in other nations as a matter of policy, was more remarkable than the fact of interference, which is generally known. It seemed likely it would be thrown back at the U.S. in the future as a corollary of the so-called Brezhnev doctrine, by which Moscow claims the right to intervene in deviationist Communist states.

Whether the new congressional review would lead to concrete action is uncertain. Senator Fulbright called for formation of a more powerful CIA review committee and Senator Church termed the U.S. role in Chile "unsavory, unprincipled, and unjustified."

But Senator Fulbright has sponsored legislation before to curb the CIA without success.

The Chile-CIA debate also contains the seeds of controversy in other areas, including the style of Dr. Kissinger. As chairman of the so-called 40 committee, an arm of the National Security Council that passes on covert CIA operations, he is informed of all such activities. Yet, according to Mr. Levinson's analysis, Dr. Kissinger told the literal truth, but avoided the whole truth during his confirmation hearings.

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